

# Slaley First School



Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025



Dear Parents,

This week has flown and suddenly we find ourselves with only 2 weeks left before the holidays!

## CULTURAL MATCH

As promised, here are some more details of the Cultural Match Programme that Miss Tait has been working on ...

Starting from the end of March (hopefully 25<sup>th</sup>) we will be working with Jeremy Bradfield to compose and perform a song. Jeremy Bradfield is a musician and songwriter who has worked on productions such as *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Snow Queen*, *Alice and Wonderland* and *James and the Giant Peach* at Northern Stage in Newcastle.

After the Easter half term, Music Partnership North are going to come into school and deliver workshops to all classes, teaching the children how to play a piece of music on either the Ukulele or Djembe drums. We also have a trip to visit The Fire Station which is a musical venue in Sunderland. Sunderland is only the second city in the UK to join the international Music Cities Network which offers its members collaborative opportunities and resources (dates to be confirmed.)

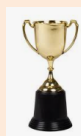
## Attendance Last Week

Larch Class - 100%

Spruce Class - 92.6%

Pine Class - 87.8%

Well done Larch Class!



## Dates for the Diary

**Thursday 6th March**

**World Book Day**

Lego themed lunch / stories / Dress up as your favourite book character or dress in non-school uniform

**W/B 7th March**

**British Science Week** - Mr. Midgley is busy organising some events and workshops.

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

**Parents Evening**

All dates from the Cultural match events outlined above will be added to this section once we are sure of the exact timings.

## Valentines Day

On Friday 14<sup>th</sup> Mrs Seymour will be making some Valentines cakes for the children ...



Thank you again to FoSS for organising the Waitrose bag pack at Christmas. Our teachers have carefully selected science resources to order and these have started arriving this week. As you know, we recently gained PSQM and it is invaluable to have all of the resources we need.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many games which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about MINECRAFT

Minecraft is a beloved classic of modern gaming. First released in 2011, this open-ended 'sandbox' game of building and exploration still has over 140 million players who happily return to play it at least once every month. Minecraft has also been utilised for much more than just entertainment: it's sometimes used in schools to teach children coding, and it's also employed as a tool for computer-aided design, which is another valuable skill. Encouraging creativity and problem solving, Minecraft has plenty to offer gamers of all ages, and it's available on almost all video game platforms.

**AGE RATING**  
7+

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### PUBLIC SERVERS

Joining a public network (called a server) lets your child potentially interact with strangers through text chat. Some servers focus on building, while others are dedicated to role-playing encouraging direct player interaction. Anyone can join public servers and connecting to one is relatively simple. Public server IP addresses (and therefore someone's location) are easy to find with search engines.

### GRIEFING

Some people in Minecraft delight in purposefully damaging or destroying another player's creation. This is called 'griefing' and is a form of bullying: it intentionally spoils someone else's experience in the game by deleting hours of their work and forcing them to start from scratch. Many public servers treat griefing as a severe offence and frequently ban offenders.

### ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's gameplay is relatively simple, and the outcome (when a child has built something new, for instance) can be extremely gratifying. This can make the game highly addictive, it's easy to lose track of time while playing Minecraft, causing committed young players to forget about other activities like homework or enjoying family time.

### SCARY ELEMENTS

The visual design and gameplay of Minecraft is purposefully child friendly, so there's nothing too untoward in the game. However, some of the 'baddies' that can be encountered might prove a little too scary for very young players. In the game, certain enemies come out at night and are accompanied by audio – such as zombie moans and skeleton bone rattles – that may unsettle young ones.

### ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

After initially buying the game, players can make optional extra purchases for cosmetic items and other bonuses. Minecraft Realms is an optional online subscription (requiring regular payments) that lets users run a multiplayer server to play with their friends. Most games consoles also need an active subscription to enable online play – so online gaming can quickly become an expensive hobby.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

There are a lots of Minecraft content creators who release helpful videos about the game on YouTube and Twitch. Not all of these, however, are suitable for children. Watching these content creators' channels yourself first is a safe way to find appropriate Minecraft videos to share with your children. This also helps you learn more about the game itself, and how your child plays it.

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting 'Creative' or 'Peaceful' mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of annoying zombies or creepers damaging your build.

### HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for your child to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given the necessary joining details. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – to ban someone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft.

### ENCOURAGE BREAKS

It's easy for the hours to fly by while your child is playing Minecraft, so reminding them to take regular breaks is essential. This is a useful way for them to learn good time management, which they'll benefit from as they get older. It will also teach them to play their favourite games in moderation – limiting addictive behaviour and allowing them to manage their day better.

### TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone needs to have contact with a stranger online. Talking to your child about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan in place for dealing with any hostile or difficult strangers. Ensure that your child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online, and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

### Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.

**NOS National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) @atnlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 23.08.2022